

SENATE—Monday, May 14, 2001

The Senate met at 12 noon and was called to order by the Honorable PAT ROBERTS, a Senator from the State of Kansas.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Almighty God, a week of responsibilities stretches out before us. As we face them, we thank You for Winston Churchill's reminder that "the price of greatness is responsibility." Father, You have entrusted the Senators with heavy responsibilities. Thank You that You will not ask more from them than You will give the strength to carry. Help them to draw on Your artesian wells of wisdom, insight, discernment, and vision. Be with them in the lonely hours of decisionmaking, of conflict over issues, and the ruthless demands of overloaded schedules. Tenderly whisper in their souls the reassurance, "I have placed you here and will not leave you, nor forsake you." In Your grace, be with their families; watch over them; and reassure the Senators that You care for the loved ones of those who assume heavy responsibilities for You. May responsibility come to mean "responsibility," a response of trust in You to carry out what You have entrusted to them. In the name of Him who lifts burdens and carries the load. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable HARRY REID, a Senator from the State of Nevada, led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. THURMOND).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, May 14, 2001.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable PAT ROBERTS, a Senator from the State of Kansas, to perform the duties of the Chair.

STROM THURMOND,
President pro tempore.

Mr. ROBERTS thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business not to extend beyond the hour of 2 p.m. with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each. Under the previous order, the time until 1 p.m. shall be under the control of the Senator from Illinois, Mr. DURBIN, or his designee.

The distinguished Senator from Nevada is recognized.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered. The distinguished Senator from Oregon is recognized.

ENERGY POLICY

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, the people of this country always come through when there are tough problems, as long as they know everyone is pitching in and doing their fair share.

That is the problem with much of what is coming out of Washington, DC, today, when it comes to this country's energy policy. Oregonians are telling me, for example, at townhall meetings that what alarms them about the energy debate in Washington, DC, is that it seems everybody is supposed to tighten their belt except for the powerful. I don't believe that passes the fairness test for most Americans. Even business leaders at home tell me the country just is not going to rally behind an energy plan that is not balanced, an energy plan that does not say: Everybody has to do their fair share.

There is not a whole lot of balance in a plan that would open up the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to drilling now, although it will not produce any gas for at least 8 to 10 years, when our consumers are getting clobbered at the gas pump today.

Where is the balance in a plan that cuts funding for renewable energy—solar, wind, and geothermal—while

building as many as 1,900 new powerplants? Where is the balance in a plan that would provide large new tax breaks for the energy industry and tells consumers the answer is to spend their tax relief on misguided energy policies? With all due respect, the idea that Americans should have to use their much needed tax relief to prop up ill-conceived energy policies is the ultimate in throwing good money after bad.

I want to take a few minutes to talk about where I think Congress ought to go with respect to the energy issue and what could constitute some of the core principles of an effective bipartisan energy policy.

First, it is time to provide significant and real financial rewards for conservation. Everybody talks about conservation. We all know it makes sense to conserve energy. But there are very few actual financial rewards for conserving. I think it is time to put real dollars behind those who are willing to make the tough decisions with respect to conservation. For example, if it is a hardship to move your energy use from peak hours to times when demand is lower, let's reward that financially. Let's reward real-time pricing so as to take steps that are meaningful to decrease electric power shortages that are now causing price spikes and blackouts.

Second, I think it is time to lift the veil of secrecy around energy markets in this country. It is clear that energy is being commoditized, but it is not possible to get real information about supply and demand and transmission, which is what is needed when energy is being bought and sold in markets all across this country.

In electricity markets today, power is, in fact, being traded as a commodity, but basic information about how electric power systems and markets work is just unavailable in much of the United States. If electricity is going to be traded as a commodity, let the Congress take steps to ensure access to information so those markets can function efficiently.

I intend to introduce legislation shortly to ensure that Americans in every part of this country can get access to information about transmission capability, outages, and the information that is needed to be in a position to make energy markets work in a fair way.

Third, to encourage responsible power production, reward developers who demonstrate a commitment to good environmental policy. I do not think energy production and meeting